



***To improve the lives of mothers and families affected by pre and postnatal depression***

## **Acacia Volunteer Pack**

Thank you for expressing an interest in volunteering at Acacia Family Support.

Here you will find some further information about our services and an application form should you wish to take your enquiry to the next step.

It would be helpful to us if you could just re-state in your covering letter;

- a) *How you heard about Acacia?*
- b) *Why did you want to volunteer for Acacia?*
- c) *Have you experienced postnatal depression yourself, or family/friends?*
- d) *Have you ever done voluntary work before?*

This information pack explains a bit more about the kind of voluntary workers we are looking for. These are: befrienders, home visitors (with an Acacia colleague), crèche workers, hospitality, or maybe specialist support (where we can draw on their expertise e.g midwife, mentor/parenting/skills, ante-natal/ breast feeding counsellor etc)

We currently have 4 centres that operate in Walmley, Kingstanding, Northfield and Saltley and our volunteers usually commit to approx 3 hours each week.

If you wish to apply to become an Acacia volunteer please complete the application form and return with a covering letter, we will then contact you to arrange a suitable date for an informal interview. We have also attached an ID Check list for you to select which identification to bring with you to the interview for us to process a CRB (DBS) application.

Before completing your application, could I please ask you to email to let me know your availability for volunteering and if there's a specific role you are interested in doing. Please find listed below the roles we have at our Centres.

Creche Worker – we have a crèche facility at every Centre

Befriending – this is a one-on-one with Mum (training will be provided)

Hospitality – serving tea, coffee and refreshments for mums

Administration support – front desk – greeting mums and assisting them with the check in procedure (applies to Walmley and Northfield only).

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further questions and I look forward to receiving your application form.

Regards, Admin Team

0121 301 5990

volunteering@acacia.org.uk



## About Volunteering for Acacia

### **What is Acacia About?**

Acacia is a small but dynamically growing registered charity operated as a company limited by guarantee. Acacia offers a befriending support service to mothers and their families affected by the symptoms associated with pre and post-natal depression, and is active in the local community to promote family well being. Acacia is currently working across the Birmingham area and is actively planning to extend services into other areas. It is a unique befriending service greatly valued by users and communities and has links to many statutory and voluntary organisations offering family support. Acacia works closely with NHS local health professionals and is commissioned by CCG's previously known as PCT's.

The Acacia service is open to all without discrimination and prejudice. Acacia is a Christian Faith based organisation with a desire to promote understanding and co-operation between people of different faiths and cultures within the local community. Acacia values and respects the contribution of those of other faiths, or no particular faith, in furthering the object, mission and ethos of Acacia.

At its centres Acacia offers a weekly one-to-one friendly support drop-in service staffed by volunteers who have suffered themselves or have a professional or voluntary trained understanding of anxiety and depression. At satellite centres Acacia conducts awareness sessions and arranges appropriate support for those requesting it.

A crèche is held during each session for pre-school children of those attending. The crèche is staffed by volunteers.

Volunteers also offer support to family members and use our signposting service to other specialist agencies and groups. We are committed to working with other voluntary, statutory and local organizations.

During holiday periods and at other times Acacia organises family educational and fun sessions.

We train and support our volunteers for the volunteer work they are doing, and offer a pastoral service to our volunteers

### **Who can volunteer?**

Acacia is a Christian Faith-based organization and believes that people of diverse cultures and perspectives have much to learn and to profit from each other. We welcome interest in volunteering from those with differing faiths, abilities and backgrounds and who are able to support and promote our mission and ethos and values in their work for us. You may volunteer to train to be a befriender, to work in the crèche, or to support in various ways such as preparing refreshments, doing administrative or finance work, fundraising and so on. We also welcome volunteers offering specialist services such as aromatherapy etc.

## Acacia Volunteer Recruitment Procedure

**Initial conversation with an Acacia Manager**  
You will be given a Volunteer Recruitment Pack.



**Application**  
If you then feel it is right to apply to be a volunteer complete and return the Volunteer Application form.  
You will be asked to provide two referees.



**Interview with an Acacia Manager**  
You will be able to ask questions, discuss the roles, and your availability. If an agreement is reached about volunteering your references will be taken up and if appropriate you will be asked to complete a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) form and provide the necessary documents.



**Delay!**  
Inevitably there is a delay waiting for references and to hear back from the CRB. It is usually possible to begin the Induction and Training subject to the above being satisfactory.  
**Getting To Know You**  
You will be invited to a social event for all new faces at Acacia



**Induction and Training**  
Subject to suitability we will ask you to sign an Agreement Form. This will:

- Indicate your role and responsibilities, your trial period and review date.
- Explain how we will train and support you . We require you to attend 2 full days of **Befriending The Acacia Way** with 4 extra workshops over the year.
- Emphasise the need to work within guidelines and good practice
- Make clear who you are responsible to, we will match you with a Buddy
- Who will be available to answer all those niggly questions you may have.

**Review after an agreed period.**

## **Supervision and Support**

All volunteers will have a line manager who will supervise them and to whom they may request support at any time. After each befriending session a 'de-brief' and support request time will be held.

Whilst it is helpful if volunteers can commit to an agreed period of service this in no way prevents a volunteer from leaving the service or asking for a change of responsibility at any time of his/her choosing. Similarly, the volunteer manager may, if in his or her opinion it is necessary, request a volunteer to agree to a change of duty, or to refrain from duty.

Through regular reviews, training and support opportunities, we aim to ensure that your voluntary work is enjoyable, rewarding and fulfilling.

## **Expenses**

Volunteers may claim genuine out-of-pocket expenses. The following are not taxable and do not create any form of contractual or employment relationship, and will not affect state benefits:

- the actual cost incurred for fares for travel between home and the place of volunteering, or between places of volunteering,
- a mileage allowance at the Inland Revenue agreed rate or less, for genuine car use for the above,
- actual cost incurred for specialist (not cosmetic) clothing required for the voluntary work,
- actual cost incurred for the purchase of materials or services required to do the voluntary work,
- actual cost of meals taken during the time of volunteering,

Voluntary organisations usually have to limit the expenses they are able to pay from their funds. Acacia cannot pay crèche or childminding fees or other dependant costs unless very special circumstances occur, and then only a contribution may be paid. Acacia also has a limit for all other expenses which is reviewed and set from time to time.

Expenses are claimed by completing a claim form available from the management teams and returning this, with the volunteer's signature, to the management teams at the end of each month. Expenses cannot be paid without the appropriate receipts being attached to the claim form. These are Inland Revenue regulations.

## **Insurance**

Responsible organisations working in the community and with volunteers require Public Liability Insurance and Employers Insurance, and additional insurance according to the services offered. Acacia is insured for all its services as advised by an Insurance Broker.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Acacia is committed to offering equal opportunities to all volunteers working for Acacia.

Users of the Acacia service are welcome regardless of their gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, physical and mental capacity and faith, subject to no person being put at risk. Volunteers must support the Acacia Equal Opportunities Policy.

## **Health and Safety**

All premises used by Acacia are subject to a health and safety assessment by the local manager. All services are subject to a risk assessment by the local manager. Volunteers must be aware of emergency procedures, and must inform management of any potential risk.

It is most unlikely that service users will pose a danger to volunteers but if you have any concern you must report this immediately to the manager in attendance. Acacia will not allow persons to use the service if there is evidence that the person may pose a threat to the safety of volunteers. Such persons will be referred to an appropriate service

## **Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints**

It means a great deal to all concerned when the service receives a compliment whether it comes from a service user or service provider. In addition the service is always open to, and appreciates, suggestions as to how the operation of the organization can be improved.

Occasionally a service user or provider will want to make a complaint because something has gone wrong or someone is dissatisfied. Acacia values the opportunity to listen, to investigate and to respond as quickly as possible.

Please refer to the policy document '**Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints**' for information concerning the correct procedure to take.

## **Confidentiality**

Volunteers have the same requirements for confidentiality as managers of the Acacia organisation. All matters discussed with service users are completely confidential and may only be shared within the Acacia organisation. Service users are invited to keep an Acacia diary and will understand that information in this is only available to and remains confidential to the Acacia organisation. Diaries will be kept in a locked cupboard or safe between sessions, the key being available only to managers/volunteers within the Acacia organization.

When a service user has been referred to Acacia by a health service professional then information is confidential between Acacia and that health service professional.

The centre manager or his/her deputy at the time will determine if at any time there is a risk of harm to anyone. If this is the case a referral will be made to the appropriate service which may mean disclosing information for the sole purpose of the safety of any person.

Information regarding volunteers is confidential to managers and the Acacia trustees and will only be shared with others with the volunteer's permission.

## **Child Safety and Vulnerable Adults Policies**

Organisations working with children and vulnerable adults (which includes the ill such as those suffering with depression) are required to obtain a disclosure check through the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) for all volunteers and staff who work with the children and adults. This is as much for the protection of the volunteers as the people we work with. Acacia recognizes and values it's 'Duty of Care' and will seek a DBS disclosure for volunteers and staff.

Please refer to our separate '**Child Safety Policy**' and '**Vulnerable Adults Policy**'. Please ask for more information if you wish.

## **ACACIA CENTRES**

### **MONDAY – 10.00 am to 12.00 pm**

Elim Pentecostal Church  
120 Warren Road  
Kingstanding  
B44 8QD

### **WEDNESDAY – 10.00 am to 12.00 pm**

Northfield Baptist Church  
789 Bristol Road South  
Northfield  
Birmingham  
West Midlands  
B31 2NQ

### **THURSDAY – 10.00 am to 12.00 pm**

St John's C of E Church  
4 Walmley Road  
Sutton Coldfield  
West Midlands  
B76 1QN

### **FRIDAY – 10.00 am to 12.00 pm**

Adderley Children's Centre  
St Saviours Road  
Saltley  
B8 1HN

## **What Identity Documents Are Accepted?**

### **Group 1 – Primary Trusted Identity Credentials**

- Current valid Passport.
- Biometric Residence Permit (UK).
- Current Photo Driving Licence (UK) (Full or provisional) Isle of Man / Channel Islands; (a photo card is only valid if the individual presents it with the associated counterpart licence; except Jersey).
- Birth Certificate (UK and Channel Islands) - issued at the time of birth; Full or short form acceptable including those issued by UK authorities overseas, such as Embassies, High Commissions and HM Forces. (Photocopies are not acceptable).

### **Group 2a – Trusted Government/State Issued Documents**

- Current UK Driving licence (old style paper version).
- Current Non-UK Photo Driving Licence (this can be used up to 12 months from the date the applicant entered the UK).
- Birth Certificate (UK and Channel Islands) - (issued after the time of birth by the General Register Office/relevant authority i.e. Registrars – Photocopies are not acceptable).
- Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate (UK and Channel Islands).
- Adoption Certificate (UK and Channel Islands).
- HM Forces ID Card (UK).
- Fire Arms Licence (UK and Channel Islands).

### **Group 2b – Financial/Social History Documents**

- Mortgage Statement (UK or EEA)\*\* (Non-EEA statements must not be accepted).
- Bank/Building Society Statement (UK or EEA)\* (Non-EEA statements must not be accepted).
- Bank/Building Society Account Opening Confirmation Letter (UK).
- Credit Card Statement (UK or EEA)\* (Non-EEA statements must not be accepted).
- Financial Statement \*\* - e.g. pension, endowment, ISA (UK).
- P45/P60 Statement \*\*(UK & Channel Islands).
- Council Tax Statement (UK & Channel Islands). \*\*
- Work Permit/Visa (UK) (UK Residence Permit) - valid up to the expiry date.
- Letter of Sponsorship from future employment provider (Non-UK/Non-EEA only – valid only for applicants residing outside of the UK at time of application).
- Utility Bill (UK)\* – Not Mobile Telephone.
- Benefit Statement\* - e.g. Child Allowance, Pension.
- A document from Central/ Local Government/ Government Agency/ Local Authority giving entitlement (UK & Channel Islands)\*- e.g. from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Employment Service , Customs & Revenue, Job Centre, Job Centre Plus, Social Security.
- EU National ID Card.
- Cards carrying the PASS accreditation logo (UK and Channel Islands).
- Letter from Head Teacher or College Principal (16/19 year olds in full time education UK only – to be used in exceptional circumstances when all other documents have been exhausted).

Please note: If a document in the List of Valid Identity Documents is:

Denoted with \* - it should be less than three months old.

Denoted with \*\* - it should be issued within the past 12 months.